

Ex ubals universitates albertaeases







### john w. cataldo

# lettering



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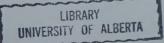
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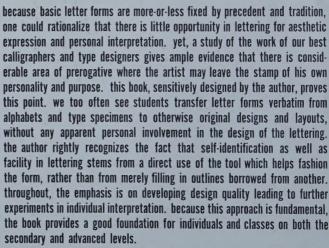
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### FOREWORD



john w. cataldo is a versatile artist and a stimulating teacher. during his undergraduate days at the massachusetts school of art, he conducted a significant study in lettering with a saturday high school class. he later studied calligraphy with arnold bank at columbia university, and graphics design with john paul jones at the university of california at los angeles. he has taught lettering and design at the university of missouri, the new york state university college for teachers at buffalo, and at teachers college, columbia university. the meticulous devotion he gave to the preparation of this book is his own best introduction.

d. k. winebrenner 2725





m.a. e.j. e.a cataldo

.k.winebrenner

jack arends s.a.czurles priscilla nye r.l.bertolli

don nichols
c. mc waid
t. mc sherry
charles pollock
c.e.bauer

students and friends

to express himself, the student eventually has to control the symbols of his culture. lettering is symbolism; it forms a language and it has to do with meanings, the forms herein included, like natural selection, are the ones that persisted throughout centuries, they have in a sense proven themselves; they are the symbols that human beings prefer to use.

i.w.c.

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### F O R M

the stages of man's cultural development are evidenced by the growth of his communication symbols.

primitive thought projection through a graphic representation.

symbol evolution



egyptian

roman

contemporary



the capitalis letter form of the ancient romans was the prototype for our contemporary letters; very few changes have been made from this original, precise form. E

F

G

**CAPITALIS** 

# leccering/

the calligrapher can adjust the size and the shape of each letter in the word, or adjust any word to make the line visually more pleasing, the ty-pographer cannot make the same changes as quickly or as effectively.

## typography

type uses a different measure, it is more mechanical and depends on mechanical processes.

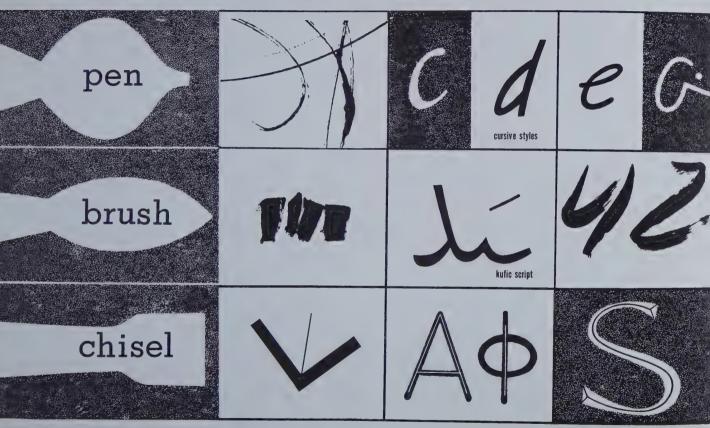
dd d

early type was the imitative product of existing writing forms

the precise character of the machine, together with space and time saving demands, led to the development of sans serif alphabets.

thought projection has been and will continue to be directly related to and limited by the formative character of the medium used. the pen, brush, and chisel shaped the peculiar form of the graphic symbol. thought projection is in a process of continual adaptation to the communication needs of mankind and will adapt itself to the period it functions in.

MEDIA



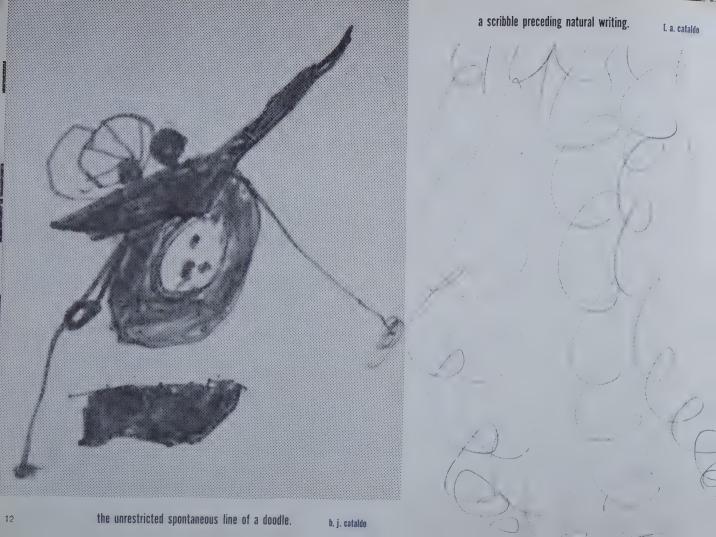
greek archaic

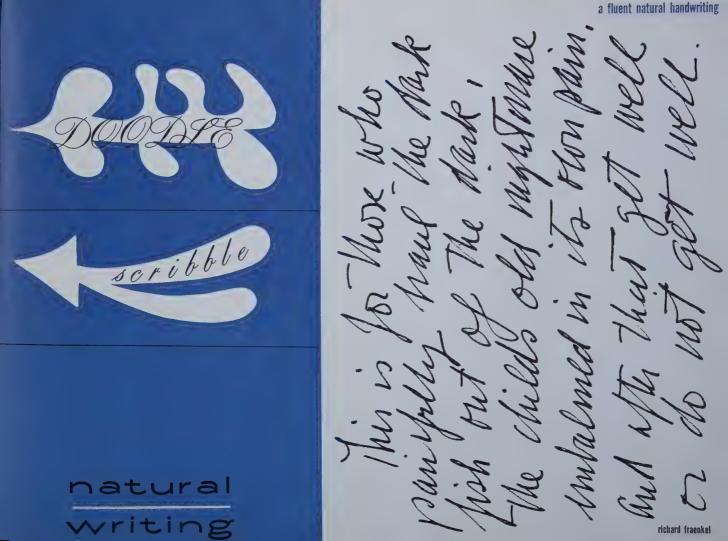
roman inscription

## line

and its' inherent significance







THE CORE OF WRITING AND CALLIGRAPHY IS CONTAINED IN THE SPONTANEITY OF THE DOODLE.

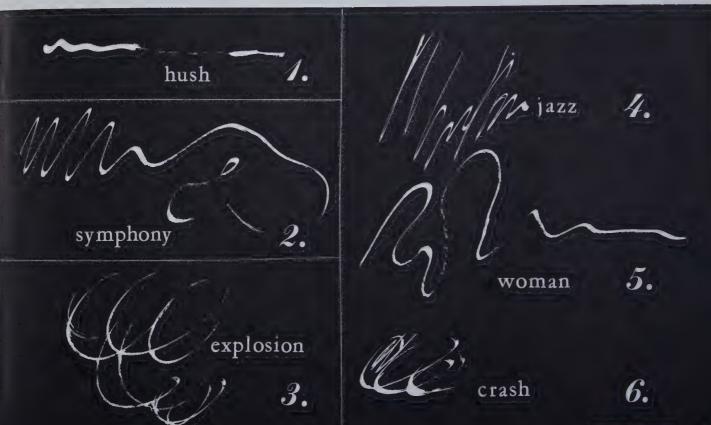
an approach to calligraphy



calligraphic play with pens, quills and sticks.

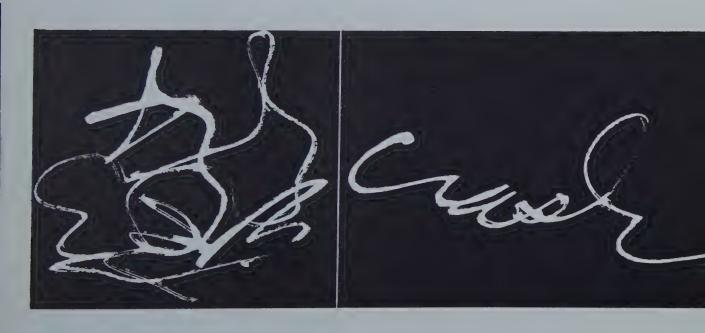
after the calligraphic exercises with traditional and experimental tools, students could relate this calligraphic play with a spontaneous response to word symbols. as the instructor speaks words, students should respond instantly and without reflective thinking, using ink and chinese brushes.





as a next step take these unrehearsed lines and use them to spell out spoken words, this is quite difficult and many attempts have to be made until a suitable correlation is achieved between the mark and a word.





this unrehearsed line was instantly made upon hearing the word 'crash' spoken and this same line was used to construct the word 'crash.'







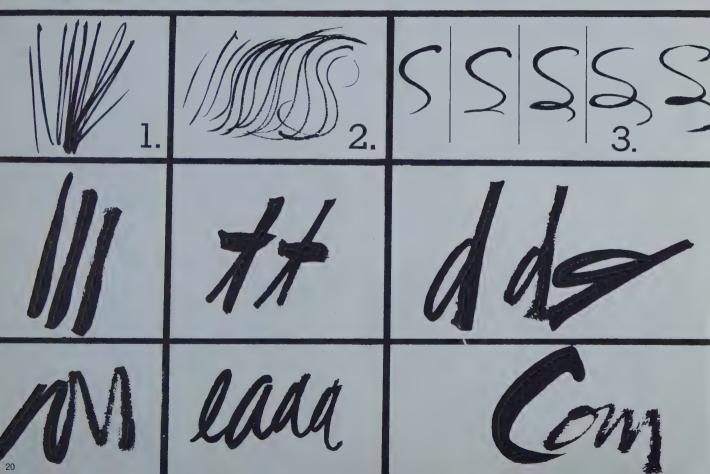
students of the author



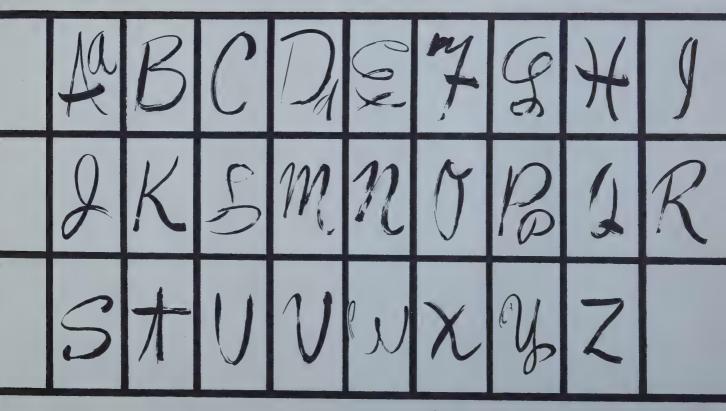
a calligraphic ink drawing of "waves and rocks" by mort grossman.



this page shows how the student might proceed from a play activity with line, to a line that relates to letters with similar basic strokes. the approach to brush calligraphy has to be spontaneous and generally requires some practice work before the final job.



### sample alphabets



alphabet by clifton mc waid

a calligraphic alphabet of any merit must retain its spontaneity and flair.

AABCD TUUWY4

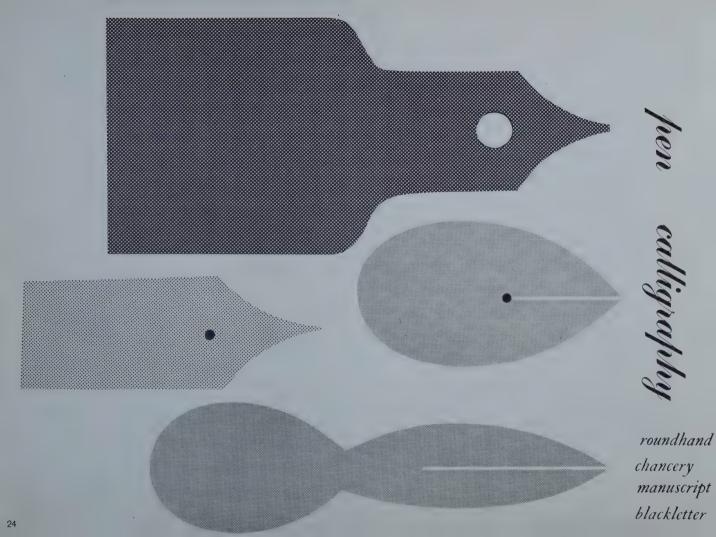
student of the author john scarcelli/"war and peace"



the above graphic plate reflects an attempt to solve a graphic problem requiring the inclusion of opposite emotions, concepts, or themes within the same configuration, some students chose to combine such basic emotions as "love & hate", or such basic concepts as "being & non-being", or such basic themes as "war & peace".

the poster to the right was accomplished by the silkscreen process. a liquid tusche was brushed directly on the silk and a glue resist was used for the printing, the student attempted to graphically interpret and enhance the literary theme and intention of the author.





THE ROUNDHAND OR BOOKHAND WAS DEVELOPED AS A WRITING ALPHABET BY THE MONKS AND SCRIBES OF WESTERN EUROPE. ITS PRINCIPLE USE WAS IN MANUSCRIPT BOOKS. THIS ROUNDHAND ALPHABET IS ALSO KNOWN AS CAROLINGIAN MINUSCULES. IT WAS DEVELOPED AT THE TIME OF CHARLEMAGNE AND FURNISHED WESTERN CIVILIZATION WITH A SMALL LETTER PROTOTYPE FOR OUR PRESENT DAY LETTER SYMBOLS.





one pen width

the pen scale of 5 for the body of the letter, 4 for the ascenders and 3 for the descenders is preruled on the page very lightly with t-square and pencil. rule four lines: top of the ascenders, top of the body of the letter, bottom of the letter, and bottom of the descenders. add a space of about one quarter of an inch and rule a fifth line. this space between lines of calligraphy prevents crowding. remember that every stroke starts, continues and ends at a 45 degree angle.



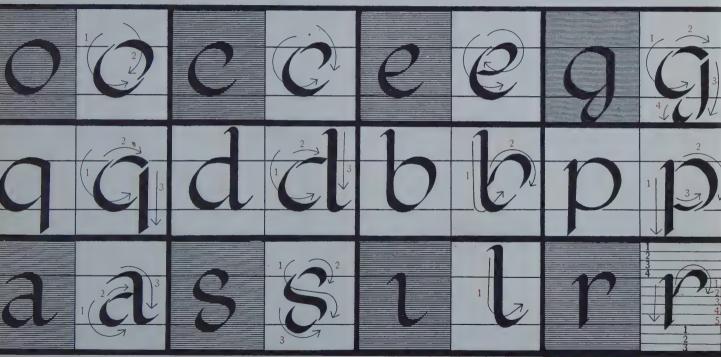
### BASIC STROKES Roundhand



#### a roundhand alphabet

pen slant of 45 degrees

this alphabet is based on a circle. notice that the "o" is a part of many of the letters on this page. to determine the correctness of this basic letter see if a white circle is contained within the black strokes. many of the letters will contain one or two of the basic strokes of the letter "o." it literally is a roundhand alphabet.



the width of whichever penpoint the student is using determines the letter proportion, one of the standard measures used by calligraphers is 5 pen widths for the body of the letter, 4 pen widths for the ascenders or risers of the letter and 3 pen widths for the descenders of the letter, these proportions are only an average and the individual should feel free to adjust them to his personal sense of rightness of the letter form, index cards for the different pen sizes save considerable time when ruling a page of guide lines.



2.

notice that in this page of similar stroke letters the straight strokes end in a sharp or rounded ending, the sharp ending is sometimes referred to as a "flick" stroke and the rounded ending as a "flair" stroke, all of the straight letters start with a tight round loop on the top and end at a 45 degree angle at the bottom, the flair ending is a generous wide loop, in this alphabet the "t", "tk", and "f" are one pen width shorter than the other ascenders, notice that the white teardrop shape of the "k" ends in the center of the body of the letter.



practice . . . . practice . . . . and more practice!



WEARE LIKE DWARES seated on the shoulders of giants: we see more things than the ancients and things more distant, but this is due not to our own stature.

Bernard de Chartres

the student work on the left is a free calligraphic play yet it is contained in a precise form, while the example on the right is a sensitive controlled layout, even though both calligraphers worked from the same classic models, their results are unique, the sample on the left is a design using letters while the sample on the right is presenting an idea, using words that must be legible, many artists are inspired by the calligraphic form of letters yet we must remember that calligraphy is a writing process that must be clearly and precisely presented; it is only by this precision that calligraphy becomes expressive and aesthetic.

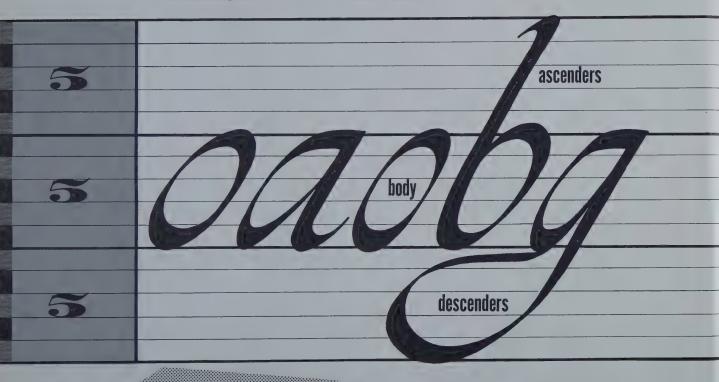


XYMNTVBPREAH





the pen scale of the chancery alphabet is: 5 pen widths for the body of the letter, 5 pen widths for the ascenders of the letter and 5 pen widths for the descenders of the letter. the width of the pen point being used is the basic measuring unit of the letters of the chancery alphabet.



pen scale

#### BASIC STROKES



the pen starts at a 60 degree angle, is continued through the letter and ends at the 60 degree angle. to capture the verve of this alphabet the student should learn to make the letters in one continuous stroke.

the disciplines required to control the chancery hand are threefold: (1) a consistent pen slant, (2) the careful maintenance of one pen scale, particularly within the body of the letter, and (3) a consistent and increased hand pressure on all down strokes with a gradual release of pressure as the down stroke moves smoothly into the curved portion of the letter, with practice all three disciplines will simultaneously come into play.

the beginner can choose between a light body india ink which is easier flowing and a dense black which gives a strong letter. perhaps it might be wiser to start with an ink that allows for the freest pen movement until the learner has the alphabet under his control. with the heavy body black inks there could be much pen clogging. both kinds of ink have different qualities to offer. pen clogging is cleared by washing the pen point in a solution of a few drops of ammonia in water.

when ruling the guide lines it's a good idea to include an occasional guide line for the pen slant since it helps to remind the calligrapher of the necessary angle required by the chancery style. the lines can be drawn lightly at irregular intervals throughout the page layout. a large bond paper pad is an excellent surface for the beginner.

the wide flare is a characteristic of the lower case alphabet and serves as a measuring space between letters of a word. notice in the words "cursive" and "hand" how the wide flares on the bottom of the letters seem to tie or lace the letters of the word together. in most cases the flare ending will touch or nearly touch the letter next to it. each calligraphic word is an individual spacing problem. remember that the letters and the words, by themselves, are only a part of the idea they help to express; it is the careful placement of the whole message on the page that makes good calligraphy easy to read and expressive.

the upper case alphabet is usually 10 pen widths high, however, they can range from 10 pen widths to 16 pen widths in height or more, depending on the character of the word and the page layout. the upper case letters are best made spontaneously and with direct, rapid strokes.





MAMBMCMDMEMFMGMHMIMJMKMLMNMOMPMQMR VM WMXM YMZ MAMBMCMDMEMEMGMHMIM JMKMLMMMNM OMPMQMRMSMTM UM VMWMXMUMZMAMB MCMDMEMFMGMHMLMJMKMLMMMNMOMPMQMRMSM TMUM VM WMXMUZMAMBMCM DMEM FMGMHMIMJMKM MMMNMOMPMQMRMSMTMUMVMWMXMUMZMAMBMCM EMEMGMHMIMJMKMLMMMNMOMPMQMRMSMTMUM WMXMUMZMAMBMCMDMEMFMGMHMIMJMKMIM <u>IMJM KM I MM M NOMPM QM RMSM IMUM</u> RICHARD HAUN

THE "M" NECKLACE ABOVE IS A STANDARD CALLIGRAPHIC EXERCISE FOR BEGINNING STUDENTS, ALTHOUGH MOST PROFESSIONALS ALSO PRECEDE EACH JOB BY EXERCISING WITH AN "O" OR "m" LOWER CASE ALPHABET, OR BOTH. THE TERM "NECKLACE" IS DERIVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE CONSECUTIVE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET ARE PRECEDED BY THE CONSISTENT USE OF ONE REPRESENTATIVE LETTER OF THAT ALPHABET. THIS APPROACH ALLOWS THE CALLIGRAPHER TO REFRESH HIS MEMORY AND TO ATTUNE HIS KINETIC RESPONSE TO THE STRUCTURE AND STYLE OF A PARTICULAR ALPHABET. NOTICE THAT WHEN ALL CAPS ARE USED IN ONE JOB THAT THE SPACE BETWEEN LINES OF COPY EQUALS THE OVER-ALL PEN HEIGHT OF THE ALPHABET USED.

Since i have set my lips to

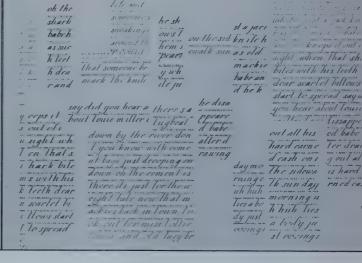
your hall cup my sweet soul and all the bloom of it

Since a my polled have be

And all the perfirme nave

tween your hands have laid now buried in the stande

Your flying wings may simte but they can never spill.
The cap fullfilled of love from which my lips are wet.
My heart has far more love than you can frost to chill.
My seed more love than you can make my heart logget.
MORE STRONG THAN TIME. VICTOR HUGO.

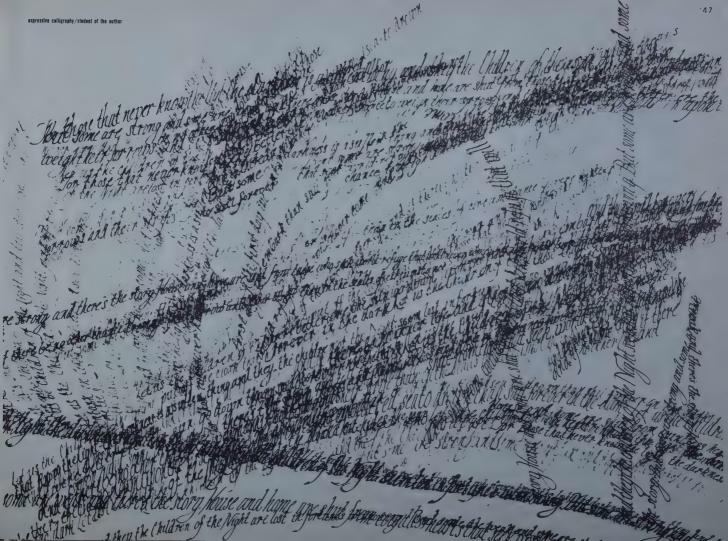


#### architectonic images shaped by using words as structural textures





although the student is introduced early to the precise and demanding skills of the chancery cursive alphabet, he soon reaches a point of expressive fluency and abstraction in his work which parallels a painterly approach to artistic problems. his calligraphic images—even when structured within architectonic formats—operate in a personal symbolic dimension which may appear to be far removed from singular word meanings, but constitute in their totality—an artistic equivalent of the author's literary intention.



Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatsoever uses that the sight of them contributes to his mental health, power, and pleasure

Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the

the student work shown here is an example of the quality of work done by students in the lettering and graphic design course of professor charles pollock at michigan state university. professor pollock describes the student examples as: "studies in rather precise forms . . . involving the factors of space, shape and contour . . . technique is confined primarily to development of an interest in and understanding of the methods most appropriate to the purpose."



SICKED SIND PROPINE
20VE, OR THERE'S
NOTHING NEW SINDER
THE POON EXTHER

A fox was boasting to a cat one day about how clever he was. Why I have a whole bag of tricks, he bragged. For instance, I know of at least a hundred different ways of escap my enemies, the dogs."

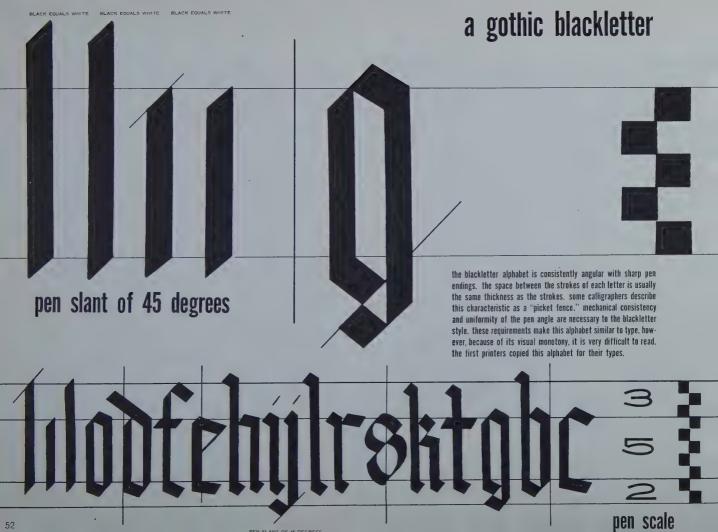
How remarkable "said the cat." As for me,

have only one trick, though I usually make it work. I wish you could teach me some of yours."

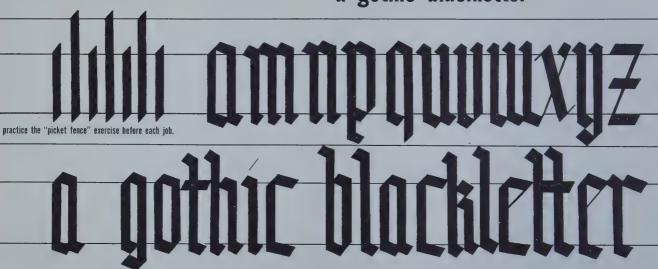
Well,sometime when I have nothing to do," said the fox, I might teach you one or two this sample shows how an expert calligrapher has adapted a natural writing hand from a calligraphic model, the chancery cursive. many calligraphers in their natural everyday writing hand use a cut fountain pen.

Assure that the distance from line to line of that which you write in this Chancery letter is not too great nor yet too little, but a satisfactory medium. The distance between words is that of an "n": between letter and letter when properly joined there is the amount of white showing between the two legs of the "n". But because it shall be nearly sinpossible to adhere slavishly to this rute, you shall be forced to take counsel of your eye and to satisfy it.

ALFRED MAURICE, CALLIGRAPHER



a gothic blackletter



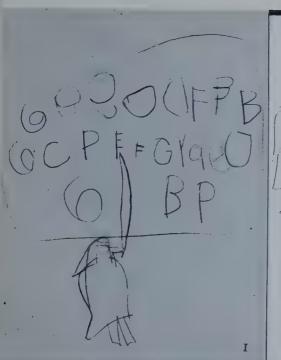
PERPENDICULAR STROKES

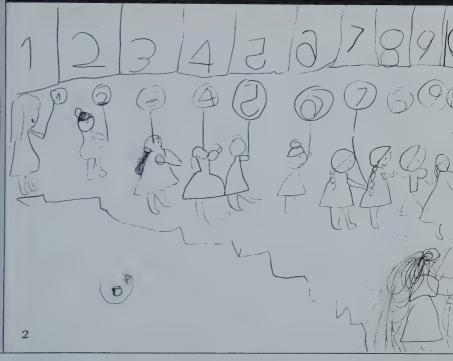
there is a brilliance of texture in the gothic blackletter alphabet that makes it ideal for manuscript use. If its use is limited it can be very effective in a page layout; overuse results in a very black page.





spontaneous play with the basic black-letter alphabet can be stimulating and productive in developing new but related letter forms. there are no rules for the capitals, they were left to the pen discretion of the calligrapher.





the child at a very early age is aware of the seemingly magical power of language symbols. he moves progressively from the use of letter and word symbols -that have no literal meaning in his pictures-to phonetic symbols rendered with a disciplined hand, the transmittance of traditional language symbols is an important educational goal, but no more emphasis should be placed on verbal communication than is afforded 54 the area of symbolic invention within visual communication.

# manuscript 6 O O C O



this alphabet can be reduced to a straight line, a circle and parts of a circle. because of its simplicity, it finds immediate use in the elementary grades as well as in the most advanced kinds of lettering uses.



photograms/l. macdenald



## manuscript

the felt pen, chalk, ball-point pen, and pencil are excellent tools for this alphabet

basic letter shape

## tfimhriilww

SKVZX 6



the pen scale of this manuscript alphabet is 6 pen widths for the body of the letter, 6 pen widths for the ascenders of the letter and 3 pen widths for the descenders, notice that in the ruling of the page there is a quarter inch space between pen scales, ideal tools for this alphabet are the round nib pen, felt pen, crayon and soft pencil, this manuscript alphabet was made with a round nib pen.



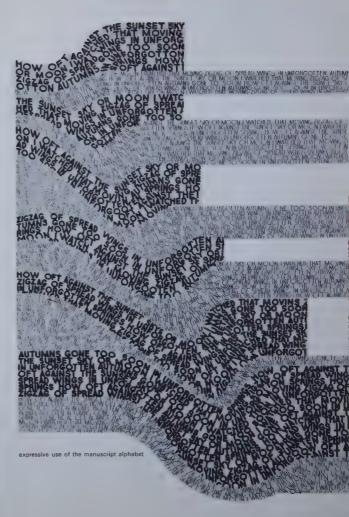
when the wind works against us in the dark, and pelts with snow the lower chamber window on the east, and whispers with a sont of stifled bark, the beast come out-come out-il couts no invaristruggle not to go with rescount our strength, two and a child-those of us not asleep schooling

Jan C Ry

when the wind works against us in the dark, and pelts with snow the lower chamber window on the east, and whispers with a sort of stifled bark, the beast, come out - come out - it costs no inward struggle not to go - ah no, count our strength, two and a child-those of us not asleep subdued

john d. boyer

the manuscript example at the top of the page demonstrates how one student premeasured his copy by using a round-nibbed felt pen to rapidly letter the text his copyfitting technique discourages the student from pre-pencilling copy, and in a sense lettering the text twice, avoids the usual disappointment that follows the inability of the beginning student to justify the right margins, and provides additional experience with a new tool for shaping an informal manuscript hand distinct from the original.





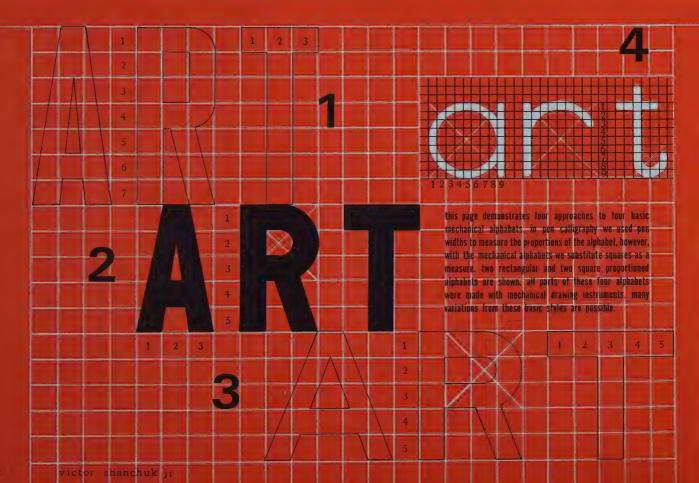
the simple yet elegant geometric nature of the manuscript alphabet allows for an easy transfer to the lettering of the same hand with mechanical instruments. the circle, straight line, and combined parts of both constitute the entire alphabet. because of this simplicity and clarity it is an ideal alphabet to introduce to children in the elementary grades as a first acquaintance and experience with the phonetic language symbols of our culture. the basic structure of this alphabet is also remarkably similar to early and contemporary typefaces and thereby prepares the child to move easily into his subsequent reading programs.

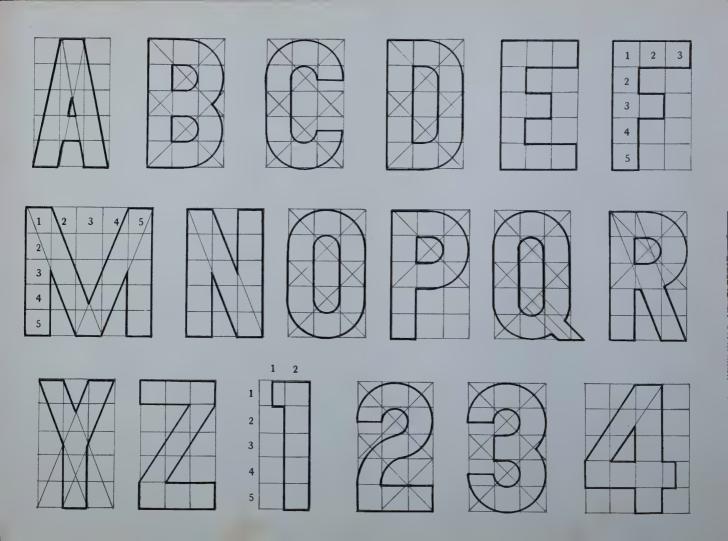


## MECHANICAL ECHANICAL ECHANICAL

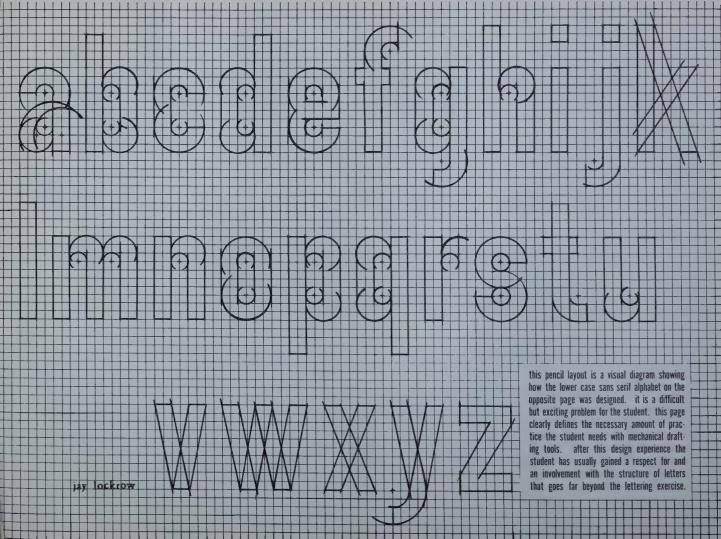


## 4<sub>alphabets:</sub> mechanical





bruce greene



this alphabet is commonly used in commercial design today, because of its directness and clarity it is a popular basic mechanical alphabet. many variations are possible and each student makes changes according to his sense of "rightness."

MECHANICAL LETTERING

don nichols

### POSTERS

"to attract the eye and convey the full meaning in this visual turmoil of events, the image must possess, like the traffic sign, simplicity of elements and lucid forcefulness" gyorgy kepes



a.martins



w.russell





m.millner

h.shayness



the above student posters show the use of letter symbols as structural elements of the poster design. the letter symbols are presented visually in the order of their importance since what is most important in the message should be seen and read first, the poster to the right introduces an assigned symbol, the indian, to help fix in the readers' mind an image of the product, this kind of symbol is usually called a trade symbol or trade mark.



b.punt



many rough sketches are made until one idea seems more effective than the rest.

these roughs are quickly made with the idea of exploring the widest range of possible

solutions to the visual problem, only one is selected for further development.



p. jedrzejek





a comprehensive layout is then made, in this case with cut paper. colored pencils, pastels or tempera are also effective. the comprehensive should be close to the final solution with only minor changes to follow; it is often used to sell the idea and make cost estimates if the job is to be reproduced.



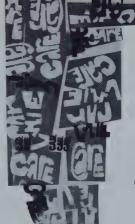


# APOSTER

1 alerts must be seen first before it can be read 2 informs implies simplicity & lucidity appeals 3 esthetic correspondence convinces &5 is lasting

implies that the poster effectively completed its communication task.





tempera and cut paper

photography and mechanical lottering

many courses in lettering, calligraphy, and poster design are organized to lead towards one final plate or poster. theoretically the student is expected to include cumulative experiences and understandings in one final artistic statement. although this unilinear and realistic approach rivals professional performance in the field and is often rewarded within the classroom by a very few highly successful graphic outcomes, the general student response to such a pragmatic definition is more often mediocre and labored. the unilinear approach is easily balanced with a series of short assignments that encourage immediate and spontaneous reactions.



mixed media; brass, wood, paper and masonite





#### hour felt pen posters

a more spontaneous approach to poster design includes the presentation of a continuous series of graphic problems that exercise the intuitive capabilities of students and require a rapid graphic solution to one-hour poster assignments. after three or four lessons the time may be gradually reduced to 30 minutes and held there for a few lessons, then 15 minutes and held then 10 minutes. less than 10 minutes per poster seems to diminish both esthetic effect and technical control and achievement. using the felt pen immediately commits the student to a definite stroke, while its expressive flexibility removes excessive concern with the technicalities of controlling sophisticated media.





#### make a 'me' poster

students may discover that after dedicated practice they have achieved control of the structure and style of an alphabet to # point of impressive calligraphic accomplishment. however even the most accomplished have difficulty in adjusting to the goals of poster design and seem to forget all their learnings when confronted with a first poster assignment. since the students have by this time developed pen and brush alphabets, it seems prudent to transfer this ability into # liberating poster approach. a "me" poster assignment usually meets with a smilling response at first, then slowly proceeds to wholeharted commitment and artistic involvement. making a graphic equivalent of "me" is no easy task for students, calligraphers, graphic designers, or painters, i suppose that only a survey of the total life's work of an artist might provide an accurate picture of his graphic attempts at self-realization.

a "yes" poster requires the student to shape an affirmative graphic image that is lucidly distinct from the negativism of the "no" poster.





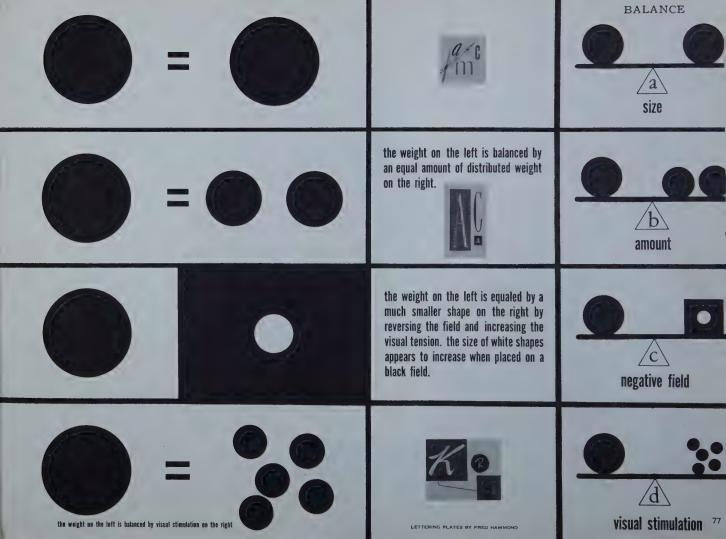
the letters in the word "art" are visually tied together by their proximity. visual tension is created wherever the letters come closest together. if the points of tension are evenly distributed throughout the word it can be assumed that the word is in an optical balance, or in other words, it "appears to be in balance".



# ART

EDUCATION

the areas of white space between the "d" and "u" and the "u" and "c" are mechanically equal in the word "education." the white space between the "i" and the "o" and the "o" and the "n" are also mechanically equal. naturally the artist will make use of this advantage and try to effect a balance between the visual tensions that serve as connectors and the mechanically even spaces between eletters, this is no easy task and every word is a complet visual problem of a different nature to the artist. the condensed mechanical alphabets rely mostly upon an average mechanical spacing between letters, whereas the roman faces depend upon their serif characteristics to " connect " or correctly space the letters of a word





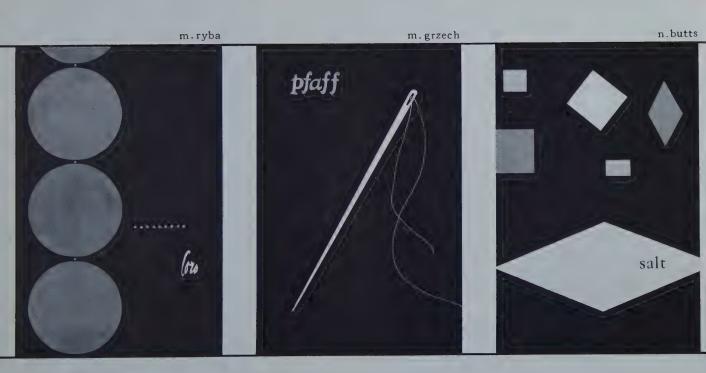
# the trade symbol



A PICTURE-SYMBOL DESCRIBING AN ANTIQUE PORCELAIN EXHIBITION. WORDS WERE ADDED ONLY TO DESCRIBE THE SPECIFICS OF THE SHOW.



TRADE SYMBOL



THE IMAGE AND THE SYMBOL ARE CLOSELY RELATED. THE SYMBOLS USED ON THIS PAGE ARE SIMPLIFIED PICTURES OF THE ACTUAL OBJECTS.

# ONE WAY

#### direction

a directional sign of simplicity and clarity.



#### information

an almost unreadable sign containing a confusion of mixed alphabets.



"this creative letter design experiment was conceived to give students an opportunity to do some original letter designing in a medium (linoleum) which would lend itself to direct reproduction with equipment readily available in the average classroom situation." don e. nichols/prof. graphic design.

ESPOSITO/GRAPHIC DESIGN MAJOR/ALBRIGHT ART SCHOOL

the initial stage of the letter design experiment was the development by the class of a complete alphabet of letters and numerals with highly individual variations in styles, and in a series of graduated sizes from one to six inches in height, images were drawn in ink, reversed, transferred to linoleum blocks, and carved with ordinary linoleum carving tools, the designs were kept direct and bold, suitable to the material and tools for their production, proofs were then taken by inking letters with hand brayers and making rubbings, using spoons for burnishers. a chart was then assembled showing the complete letter series with its wide variety of styles and sizes, the linoleum blocks were then made available to all the class members for their next series of experiments dealing with letter organization.

#### experimental letter design



the second stage of the design experiment was the development by each student of a series of interesting letter organizations using colored inks, transparent effects, overprinting and the integration of textural areas.

the organization was achieved by rubbing impressions on relatively thin paper or by overprinting individual letters on tracing paper, then arranging and cementing in position. where press facilities are available, more complex arrangements and registration can be readily achieved.

transparent inks in the three basic process colors were used, with many color variations achieved by mixing or overprinting, thereby arriving at secondary hues. the students experimented with the brayer to produce stimulating value and textural contrasts in the background. wood, stone, leaves, cloth, screening, crumpled paper are all good sources for these textural effects. offset impressions were sometimes used by inking a textured surface, transferring that ink impression to a clean roller and, in turn, offsetting the image on the roller to the paper surface. the use of transparent acetate for some of the printed impressions often facilitated the achievement of the final result. the gradual emergence of the total design had many analogies to previous experiences of the students in design and painting courses.



the experimental lettering shown on this page has spontaneity and verve. this is best accomplished by a play activity approach. notice how upper and lower case are combined in a single word.



experimental letter design

connor everts

### doodle a letter

one approach to experimental letter design starts with the use of a conventional type form, drawings and doodles are made which relate to the sample letter but begin to assume a uniqueness of their own, this kind of fun exercise can be done quickly and actually is a search for form, it is as stimulating as any game and the play approach seems to give excellent results, to the advanced lettering student it has all the excitement and profundity of a game of chess.

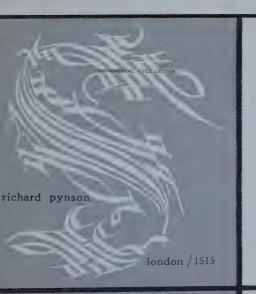
to give excenent results. to the auranced lettering student it has an the excitement and profundity of a game of chess.						
A	A	14	1	A	A	
	r	r	r	þ	-	
t	と	2	t	t	1	



examples shown are the work of students of charles pollock, professor of art at michigan state university. professor pollock describes these examples as, "studies in rather precise forms, whether type faces, letters based on early calligraphic models, or improvisations and simulated scripts.



## INITIALS











initials and decorative letters are almost always the natural result of a doodling approach. used in a page layout or poster they announce the attitude of the message to the reader long before he becomes involved with the verbal message. the initial letter can be a graphic image complete in itself, serving no other function than decoration or poetic imagery, or it can serve as part of a word.



letter symbols are a constant source of inspiration for designers. letters and their elements have been used as design elements in a great many functional and decorative objects: printed cloth material, hooked rugs, jewelry and metalwork, and wood objects. the approach shown on this page is that of a student who is most interested in painting and uses the letter symbols for other than functional uses. here the student is making a design or graphic image from letters for aesthetic purposes only, he is not attempting to communicate an idea by using the letters as words.

# ar Ts







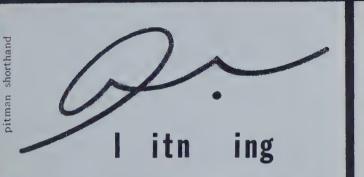


# East & West

it is interesting to compare the letter or idea symbols of different cultures made with a similar tool. the alphabets of the east contain from 4000 to 6000 ideographs that are symbols of ideas, while the alphabet of the western cultures contains 26 phonetic letter symbols. the evolution of the development of our alphabet from ideograph to phonogram to the present phonetic alphabet was relatively easy to accomplish, whereas the eastern cultures are politically split on the use of ideographs versus a phonetic latinized alphabet. many eastern cultures have chosen to latinize their alphabets and are making rapid progress in this direction.

this page attempts to deal with ideas that concern the persistent improvement of handwritten communication by different cultures. the simplification of the ideographs of the eastern cultures and the phonetic systems of the western cultures seems to imply that perhaps a bridge between both cultures exists in the area of the so called phonetic shorthand systems and quite possibly a universal alphabet is slowly evolving.

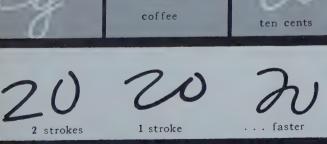
# ideas



japan

the nakane system devised by nakane massayo is similar in appearance to the pitman system of english requiring a six months course for beginners to attain average speed of 220 symbols, not words, per minute. diet proceedings are taken phonetically and later transcribed for the permanent record.

r. k. hall



english muffin



china: old & new ideographs

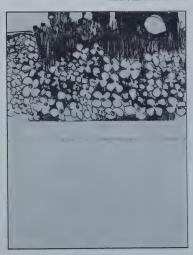
H. R. LIEBERMAN/CHINA'S LINGUISTIC REVOLUTION, N.Y. TIMES, JANUARY/1956.

the above examples of natural handwriting were made by a waitress writing out dinner checks with increasing speed. the effect of this increased speed was to change the form of the letters to a personal shorthand system.

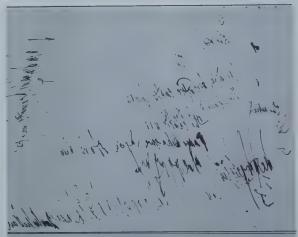
chinese ideographs number about 40,000 although about 2,500 are in everyday use. to simplify handwriting an abbreviated free-style writing is being encouraged, the next step from ideographic simplification is a romanized phonetic system, in existence in china is a 28 letter alphabet known as "latinxua" which had appeal at one time. a latinxua association as well as an esperanto society was established in 1941, these tendencies on the part of eastern cultures to move toward phonetic systems commonly used by most languages of the world are exciting to speculate upon when considering the development and use of a universal language.

# ideas | abstract writing

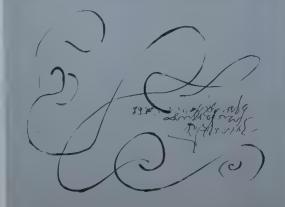
literal treatment of an idea



abstract writing has its roots in the traditional handwriting style of a culture. as a point of departure the calligrapher usually composes or copies a poem that has special meaning for him. then, using a pen, brush, or stick he attempts to treat the literal idea in highly subjective and nonverbal ways. the "writing" gradually takes on the characteristics of expressive painting and parallels the departures made from classical themes



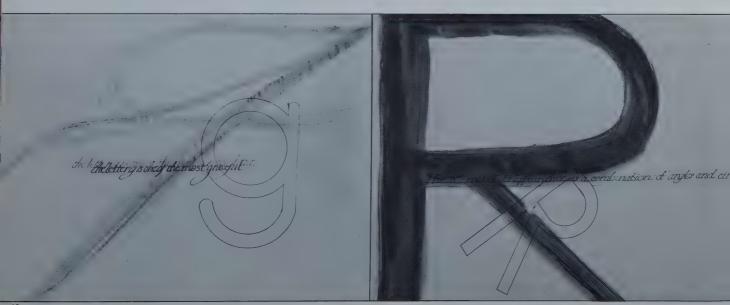
non-verbal abstract writing

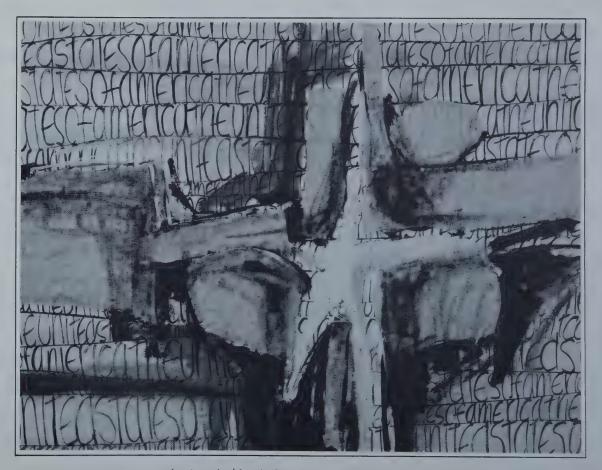




# a scroll alphabet

in order to encourage an expressive use of three newly acquired lettering alphabets, students were asked to combine them in one continuous scroll alphabet. inexpensive rolls of shelf paper provided an excellent working surface while allowing for wide lateral movements. the scroll alphabet was limited in time and students were obliged to move swiftly through it. little—if any—time was available for overworrying and thereby overworking individual letters of the alphabets. obviously it requires more time to render the mechanical alphabet with precision, but this technical concern was superceded in the beginning by stressing graphic design and the over-all esthetic effect of the scroll alphabet.





redesign the flag

students in an advanced graphic design class were given the problem of redesigning the flag of the united states of america. one student attempted to establish a graphic correspondence between the flag's design and the major crisis met and surmounted by this country since its inception. The single star symbolically embraces all the states while the large shapes reflect significant crisis such as the revolution, the civil war, two world wars and civil rights sisues.

"i think that lettering is a separate visual graphic study in itself. i have broken it down into sections and started with calligraphy. we started with the idea of the doodle, then natural writing, pen and brush calligraphy, and then went into the mechanical letter."

"if they use a nib pen, they can't help but understand how lettering was structured. it seems to me that the ones who do some of the top work in the field do it without very fancy equipment. the ability to put down clearly and neatly what they want to say is most important. I would want to give them more reliance on the pen."

"there is always the problem of how to limit these things. you not only have the presentation of ideas, but you always have the level of ideas that we are concerned with. it is an idea of what density? they have to get an understanding of signs, of symbols. they have to select the tools and processes that will do the job most effectively for them. they have to make this selection even though the processes may be mechanical."

"in order to have communication we need to have the same signal system, and it is a little different from some of the other things they do in private art. in high school work, in many situations, the students, instead of getting the feel of lettering—the rhythmical feeling of lettering, draw around an outline or copy an alphabet card."

"i checked with mine to see what they were doing in other classes and i keep seeing that there is the same thing required as in this course, design. We are all working toward that. My students have done some fine work with their design instructors, studying relationships of different spaces. If they had more of that before they had layout i think they would see these relationships in advertising. At this stage we have to give them a great deal that will help them in design."

"i am glad the word 'precision' has been brought out. what happens is that when the students come here they live in dread of lettering. they are afraid of lettering because they are afraid of precision. they are interested more exclusively in the free arts, with no responsibility for specific, exact communication. in this course an idea, a presentation, is not good if it is not precise to something. It is all right to develop something in sketch, but then you must further develop and compose it into a meticulous form."

#### 1. effective communication

- 1. spatial control.
- 2. signs/symbols images.
- 3. reproduction techniques and processes.

#### 11. research

- 1. historical development of communication symbols and media.
- 2. new. developments in communication means and processes.
- 3. psychology of communication.

#### III. presentation

- 1. studio-workshop approach supplemented with lectures, visual aids, field trips.
- 2. discussion and evaluation related to individual problems.
- 3. class involvement with immediate active problems, e.g., school publications, displays and exhibitions, community improvement.

#### V. evaluation

- 1. quality and effectiveness of solutions to communications problems.
- 2. philosophic understanding of the meaning of communication and effectiveness of media used.



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